

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 07593 261650Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 TRSE-00 OMB-01 /057 W
-----270632Z 058347 /20

R 261229Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3671
INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMCONSUL BOMBAY
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
AMCONSUL MADRAS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE NEW DELHI 7593

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, IN
SUBJECT: KASHMIR: GOI AND JANATA REACTION TO SHEIKH ABDULLAH'S
SECESSION THREAT

REF: NEW DELHI 7432

1. SHEIKH ABDULLAH'S MAY 23 THREAT THAT KASHMIR MIGHT
SECEDE FROM THE INDIAN UNION IF ITS SPECIAL POSITION IS
ERODED (REFTEL) PRODUCED A SPATE OF OFFICIAL, PLITICAL AND
EDITORIAL REACTION.
2. ON THE OFFICIAL EDE, A GOI SPOKESMAN STATED ON MAY 25
THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD NO INTENTION OF ABROGATING ARTICLE 370
OF THE CONSTITUTION (WHICH PROVIDES FOR THE STATE'S SPECIAL
STATUS). HE HOPED THAT THIS OFFICIAL CLARIFICATION WOULD
REMOVE ANY "MISUNDERSTANDINGS" CREATED BY ABDULLAH.
3. AS FOR POLITICAL FIGURES, JANATA PARTY PRESIDENT CHANDRA
SHEKHAR TOLD APRESS CONFERENCE MAY 25 THAT THE RULING PARTY

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HAD NEVER STATED THAT IT WOULD ABROGATE ARTICLE 370, ADDING
THAT IT WAS "UNFORTUNATE" THAT THE SHEIKH HAD RAISED THE
SLOGAN "AS A BOEGEY FOR ELECTORAL ADVANTAGE IN THE COMING POLL."

4. IN KASHMIR, REACTION ALSO SOUGHT TO DISCOUNT THE SERIOUSNESS
OF ABDULLAH'S THREAT AND DESCRIBED IT AS CAMPAIGN RHETORIC.
J&K JANATA LEADER SHEIKH ABDUL REHMAN SAID THAT ABDULLAH

WAS TRYING TO SIDETRACK THE REAL ISSUES INVOLVED IN THE ELECTION "TO COVER HIS OWN MISDEEDS" AS CHIEF MINISTER. IN A STATEMENT THAT WILL MYSTIFY HIS PAKISTANI ADMIRERS, AWAMI ACTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MAULVI FAROOQ RIDUCULED THE SHEIKH'S THREAT AS POLITICALLY MOTIVATED PROPAGANDA. HE ALSO CHARGED THAT THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE WAS SEEKING TO AROUSE COMMUNAL PASSIONS BY DESCRIBING THE JANATA PARTY AS A COLLECTION OF JAN SANGH ELEMENTS. (NOTE: THE MAULVI'S AWAMI ACTION COMMITTEE IS REPORTEDLY ON THE VERGE OF FORMING AN ELECTORAL ALLIANCE WITH THE JANATA AND JAMAAT-I-ISLAMI FOR THE STATE ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS.)

5. EDITORIAL COMMENT IN THE DELHI PAPERS FOLLOWED SIMILAR LINES, DESCRIBING THE QUESTION OF J&K'S STATUS AS A "DEAD ISSUE." THE "INDIAN EXPRESS" AND PRO-CPI "PATRIOT" TERMED ABDULLAH'S THREAT AN ACT OF "DANGEROUS MEGALOMANIA" AND "INFANTILE DEMAGOGY" DESIGNED TO AROUSE COMMUNAL PASSIONS FOR HIS OWN POLITICAL ADVANTAGE. ACCORDING TO THE "EXPRESS", "NO RESPONSIBLE PARTY IN INDIA HAS ANY INTENTION TO ERODE ARTICLE 370."

6. THE ELECTION COMMISSION IN DELHI HAS FINALIZED THE DATES FOR HOLDING THE J&K ELECTIONS FOR JUNE 30, JULY 2 AND JULY 3. THE BALLOTING FOR THE LADAKH LOK SABHA SEAT, DEFERRED PENDING THE MELTING OF WINTER SNOWS, WILL BE HELD AT THE SAME TIME.
GOHEEN

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